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Spring 2-1-2010

PSC 320.01: European Union

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European Union

Class Location: Liberal Arts 337
Meeting Time: TR 8:10-9:30 a.m.
Website: <http://courseware.umt.edu>
CRN (Add/Drop): 35063

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Office: Liberal Arts 349
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“The contribution which an organized and living Europe can bring to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations.”

— FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER ROBERT SCHUMAN, MAY 9, 1950

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course analyzes the politics — *who gets what, when, and how* — of the European Union (EU), an economic and political union of 27 member states. The EU is a unique set of institutions — *structures and mechanisms of social order and cooperation governing the behavior of a set of individuals* — designed to help its members resolve certain collective action problems. The effectiveness of the EU's institutions at resolving collective action problems is heavily influenced by the ideational and historical context in which they are used. Therefore, in this course we examine the ideas behind European integration, the history of integration, and the institutions established to govern the EU.

This course is highly informed by *historical institutionalism*, a family of theoretical approaches that stresses the importance of institutions in shaping social behavior and the need to study the history of institutions to understand why political actors behave as they do within different institutional contexts. The basic assumptions of this approach are summarized by the “five principles of politics” listed in the table above.

Five Principles of Politics

1. All politics is collective action.
2. Collective action is problematic.
3. Institutions help fix collective action problems.
4. Ideas matter.
5. History matters

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Explain how the EU's three main legislative institutions function together.
- Analyze European integration using different conceptual approaches.

- Evaluate and select competing solutions to Europe's collective action problems.
- Explain key concepts about integration to others both verbally and in writing.
- Generalize conceptual knowledge about integration to new situations.

Learning Environment and Required Materials

I believe learning is using information to gain an understanding of how things work and how to make them better. This course employs several different pedagogical methods to create an effective learning environment where students will enhance their ability to:

- ask the right questions and frame good problems,
- acquire information and evaluate sources of information,
- critically investigate and solve problems,
- make choices among different alternatives,
- explain concepts to others both verbally and in writing and,
- generalize to new situations.

Instructional Methods

To provide students an opportunity to practice these skills, this course is primarily conducted using a student-centered instructional strategy called *problem-based learning* in which students collaboratively solve problems and reflect on their experiences. Students will be assigned to a *learning group* of 3-4 students and work on a series of progressively more challenging problems described below. This form of cooperative learning is effective in helping students be successful in the classroom since it assures active learning and teams working together can accomplish more together than individuals working alone.

To introduce students to the history, institutions, and policies of the EU, the first third of the semester will consist of a series of lectures and discussions. Students will take a 100-question multiple choice test to hold students accountable for this information.

Required Materials

There are two *required* textbooks available at the UC Bookstore:

Bomberg, Elizabeth, John Peterson, and Alexander Stubb, editors. 2008. *The European Union: How Does It Work?*, 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199206391.

Peterson, John, and Michael Shackleton, editors. 2006. *The Institutions of the European Union*, 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199279005.

Course Requirements

Full details on all assignments are available on Blackboard under “Assignments.”

Midterm

There is a midterm to evaluate their knowledge and comprehension of the history, formal and informal institutional structure, and policy competencies of the EU.

Library Research Assignment

Students will model the instructor’s expectations for research and problem solving by completing an assignment and attending a mandatory session in the Mansfield Library.

Learning Groups

Randomly assigned learning groups will work on a series of four progressively more challenging problems related to European Integration. For each problem, groups draft a two-page policy memo and present their analysis of the problem and alternative solutions to the class. The assignments are:

Schuman’s Declaration. European Integration began with a declaration by French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman on May 9, 1950. Students will assume the role of advisors to Mr. Schuman and advise him on what to say.

The Democratic Deficit. The democratic deficit in the EU refers to a perceived lack of democracy due to a lack of legitimacy in EU institutions and a lack of influence of its citizens. Students will evaluate perceptions of the democratic deficit and recommend appropriate policies to respond to this major concern.

The Lisbon Treaty. Each learning group will be assigned a different major institutional actor in the EU. Groups will evaluate the effect of the new [Lisbon Treaty](#) on their institution and recommend how the institution should respond.

Public Policy. Each learning group will be assigned a different major policy challenge facing the EU. Groups will evaluate the options available to the Union and recommend appropriate policies for resolving their policy problem.

Legislative Simulation

Students’ individual understanding of how the EU helps states resolve collective action problems will be assessed through a simulation of the Union’s *ordinary legislative process*. Students will be assigned a policy actor in the EU’s legislative process and asked to write a four page policy-memo outlining their actor’s position on a new “Chocolate Directive” (i.e., the law defining what products can legally be sold as chocolate). Based on students’ memos, the class will engage in a conciliation conference to agree a new directive. After the simulation, students will write a two-page debriefing paper evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability of the Union.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students have the responsibility to attend class regularly and complete all assigned readings before coming to class.
2. Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor beforehand of any reasons why they are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time.
3. Students have the responsibility to complete all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor.
4. Students have the responsibility to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. University policy on incomplete coursework will be adhered to strictly.

Academic Misconduct Policy

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

Statement On Disabilities

I strongly encourage students with documented disabilities to discuss with me appropriate accommodations. Because I am not qualified to make an assessment of your need for an accommodation or what accommodations are needed, if you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course please present me with a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

Grading

Grades will be based on the work in learning groups as adjusted by peer evaluations (See below), the midterm exam, library research homework, and student's simulation policy memo, participation, and debriefing paper. Grades will be calculated on a 1000 point scale with grades are weighted as follows (Italicized grades are individual grades):

<i>Midterm:</i>	<i>100 points</i>	Presentation #3:	75 points
<i>Library Homework:</i>	<i>50 points</i>	Policy Memo #4:	125 points
Policy Memo #1:	35 points	Presentation #4:	75 points
Presentation #1:	15 points	<i>Simulation Memo:</i>	<i>150 points</i>
Policy Memo #2:	75 points	<i>Sim. Participation:</i>	<i>50 points</i>
Presentation #2:	25 points	<i>Debriefing Paper:</i>	<i>100 points</i>
Policy Memo #3:	125 points		

The plus/minus grading system will be used with grades based on total points earned: A = 1000-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-639, F = < 600.

Peer Evaluations

To ensure individual accountability, students complete confidential peer evaluations on Blackboard after each group project (Each set of memos and presentations are evaluated together). Group members evaluate each other, but not themselves, by assigning a "shares" in the group's work. A fair contribution to the group's efforts is worth two shares. Students have an extra share to distribute to the group's MVP. Any additional shares awarded above the two share average must come at the expense of other group members serving as a deterrent for free riding.

A student's grade on an assignment will be raised or lowered if their average shares deviates from the two share average by more than half a share. Students cannot earn more than full credit for an assignment. The changes are listed in the table at right. Single outlying scores (both positive and negative) are discarded in the calculation of your average shares to limit the impact of individual personality clashes and randomness. Because of the MVP share, this system raises grades more often than it lowers them. Students who do not complete a peer evaluation for an assignment will receive an F for the assignment.

Average Shares	Grade Modification
< 0.5	No Credit
< 1.5	-1 Letter Grade
> 2.5	+1 Letter Grade
> 3.5	+2 Letter Grades

Course Schedule

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule as the semester develops.

Date	Topic or Activity	Assignments
Jan 26	State of Nature Simulation; Syllabus	
Jan 28	Introduction to Five Principles of Politics	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 1
Feb 2	A Brief History of the EU, pt. 1	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 2
Feb 4	A Brief History of the EU, pt 2	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 9
Feb 9	How the EU is Governed, pt. 1	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 3
Feb 11	How the EU is Governed, pt. 2	Bomberg & Stubb, Chs. 4-5
Feb 16	What the EU Does: Economic Policy	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 6
Feb 18	What the EU Does: Non-Economic Policy	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 7
Feb 23	What the EU Does: Foreign Policy	Bomberg & Stubb, Ch. 10
Feb 25	Midterm	

Date	Topic or Activity	Assignments
Mar 2	Library Session: Practice Problem	Meet at Mansfield Library
Mar 4	Problem-based Learning & Policy Memos	
Mar 9	Discuss Practice Problem; Problem 1	Library Homework Due
Mar 11	Research and Discuss Problem 1	
Mar 16	Presentations: Problem 1; Problem 2	Policy Memo #1 Due
Mar 18	Research and Discuss Problem 2	
Mar 23	Presentations: Problem 2; Problem 3	Policy Memo #2 Due
Mar 25	Research and Discuss Problem 3	
Week of March 30-April 1: Spring Break		
Apr 6	Presentations: Problem 3	Policy Memo #3 Due
Apr 8	Presentations: Problem 3	
Apr 13	Presentations: Problem 3; Problem 4	
Apr 15	Research and Discuss Problem 4	
Apr 20	Individual Research Day for Simulation	
Apr 22	Presentations: Problem 4	Policy Memo #4 Due
Apr 27	Presentations: Problem 4	Simulation Memos Due
Apr 29	Presentations: Problem 4	
May 4	Conciliation Simulation	
May 6	Conciliation Simulation; Evaluations	
May 13	Final Exam Period: Debriefing Paper Due by 10:00 a.m.	